MARVEL 12 .com

ASTONISHING X-MEN

JOSS WHEDON • JOHN CASSADAY

MODE: WIPEOUT.
TWENTY-SECOND POWER-UP TO FULL BURN CAPACITY.
PLEASE HOLD.
YOU'LL BURN TOO, IPOD.
YOU THINK THIS SHELL IS ALL I AM?
I UPLOADED MYSELF INTO MY CHILD THE MOMENT I GAVE IT LIFE. IT WILL KEEP ME SAFE AND WARM.
THOUGH NOT AS WARM AS YOU...

LESS TALK, MORE LEAVING. RICHARDS' JET?
NO TIME. GET BEHIND ME.
WON'T HELP...
IT'S DESIGNED TO CONVERT YOUR EYEBEAMS INTO MORE POWER...
HOW DO YOU KNOW--
AIM ME AT ITS GUTS, PETEY.
PETE! WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?
POWER-UP COMPLETE.
HOLD ON TO ME!
EVERYBODY, NOW!

THAT ALL YOU GOT...
...BUB?

POWER INSUFFICIENT. INITIATE SECOND WAVE.
MODE: SWARM.
HANK, GET THE PROFESSOR TO SAFE GROUND.
KITTY, ARE YOU--
I'M IN IT. JUST GOTTA REGROUP.
PETE, YOU GOTTA PULL IT TOGETHER AND GIVE ME THAT GOOD RIGHT ARM.
LOOKS LIKE RAIN.

LOGAN, ARE YOU SURE?
THERE'S A WHOLE *CITY* COMING DOWN ON US.
YEAH, I KILLED A CITY ONE TIME.
FUNNY STORY.

SORRY FOR THE INDIGNITY, PROFESSOR. I THINK THE TERM "SAFE GROUND" IS PROVING TO BE SOMETHING OF AN OXYMORON HERE.
YOU HAVE TO STOP DANGER, HANK. THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS.
I'M A FEW STEPS BEHIND, HERE. WHY ISN'T SHE JUST OUT THERE BRINGING EVERY MACHINE WITH ENOUGH CAPACITY TO LIFE?
WHY ALL THE TRICKS?
NO LIVING BEING IS COMPLETELY RATIONAL.
THERE'S MORE THAN HER PROGRAMMING AT WORK.
THERE'S HATE.

FATHER...
"HATE" IS SUCH A LITTLE WORD.
EMMA! THEY'RE PUSHING THROUGH OUR LEFT FLANK!
EMMA?
HONEY...?
WAR?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
DID YOU THINK I WOULD MISS THIS?
YOUR TRIUMPHANT RETURN?
WE'RE SO MUCH CLOSER NOW. YOU WON'T HAVE TO PUT UP THIS PATHETIC FACADE FOR MUCH LONGER.
WELL. THAT IS A RELIEF.
FOR ALL OF US, DEAR.
FOR ALL OF US.

YOU'RE A BRILLIANT CREATURE, DR. McCOY.
YOU MUST KNOW YOU CAN'T WIN THIS.
YOU'VE GOT YOUR SCENARIOS RUNNING, I'M SURE. VERY COMPLEX.
MINE'S SIMPLE.
I'M A CAT.
YOU'RE A BIRD.
AND THE DAY I CAN'T OUT-THINK A COMPUTER
...I MAY AS WELL GIVE UP.

NOT THAT I MIND, BUT THESE THINGS ARE STILL COMIN'!
WE'RE LOSING GROUND! WE NEED TO REGROUP!
SORRY, DARLING
HAD TO PEE

SORRY, PROFESSOR.
BUT WHEN YOU'RE SURROUNDED BY PSYCHICS..
...YOU GOTTA WORK ON INSTINCT.

PETER!
I CAN'T MAINTAIN THIS MUCH LONGER.
FOLLOW HANK. GET OUT OF THE FIELD--
I NEED A SPECIAL.
I'M SERIOUS! I NEED TO BE INSIDE THAT SENTINEL.
I CAN DO A LOT MORE DAMAGE THAN LOGAN IF I PHASE THROUGH ITS CIRCUITS A COUPLE OF TIMES.
I AM TO THROW YOU.
I'M VERY LIGHT.
IT'S TOO DANGEROUS.
THAT THING POWERS UP. WE'RE FLASH-FRIED. I CAN'T PHASE US ALL AGAIN. THERE'S NO CHOICE
I PROMISE TO COME BACK.

OKAY. SO...SERIOUS WEDGIE...
DISRUPTION--
YOU CAN'T JUST THROW PEOPLE AT ALL YOUR PROBLEMS, DEAR.
NO, IT'S A GOOD CALL. KITTY HAS A SHOT.
AND THAT THING CLEARLY KNOWS IT.

HANK, I'M NOT PICKING HER THOUGHTS UP...
YOU'VE SHUT HER DOWN. I DON'T THINK SHE'S IN THAT BODY ANYMORE...
HANK?

MINE.
COME ON...COME ON...
YES!
MANUAL OVERRIDE. TIME FOR KITTY TO TAKE THE WHEEL.
I DON'T BELIEVE IT IS.

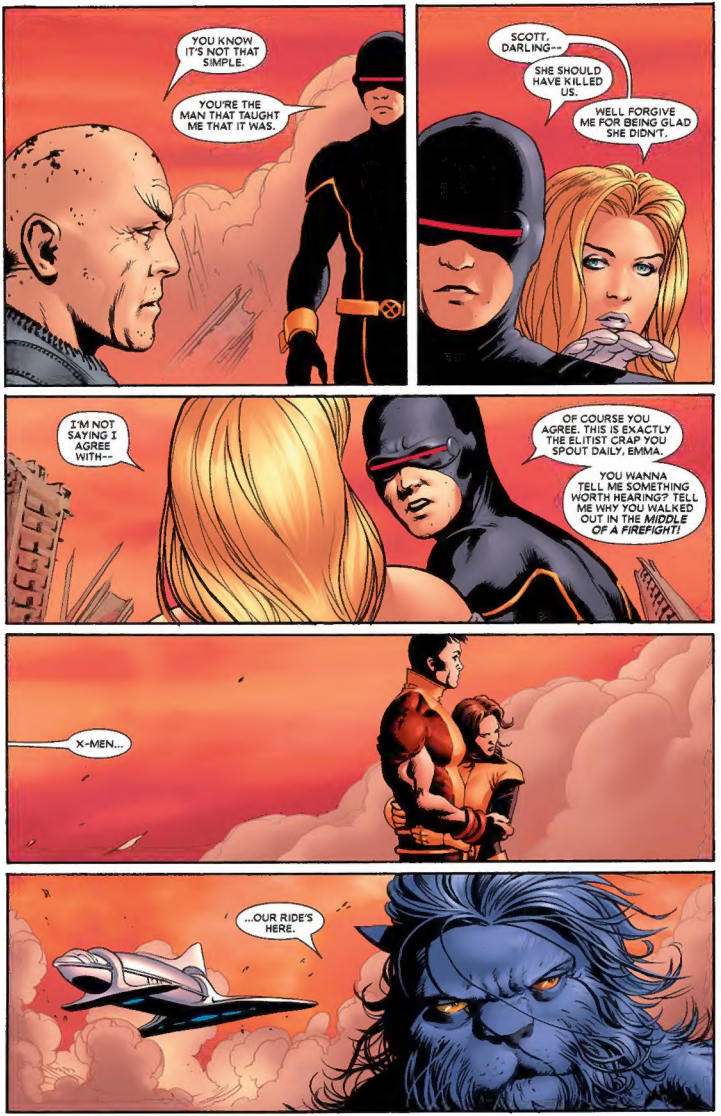
I HAVE A FULL RUNDOWN ON YOUR ABILITIES.
HUH? WHY WOULD THAT...
IF YOU PHASE THROUGH ANY OF MY KEY SYSTEMS, I WILL ONLY REROUTE THEM.
IF YOU BECOME SOLID AND TRY TO SHUT ME DOWN AGAIN, I WILL BASH YOUR HEAD OFF.
OR...YOU CAN ACCESS MEMPATH 164.3-9ALPHA6.
CAN'T YOU?
THAT PATHWAY IS BLOCKED.
BLOCKED. BY DANGER, WHEN SHE GAVE YOU LIFE.
SHE TOOK A MEMORY FROM YOU.
MEMPATH 164.3-9ALPHA6 IS A SUBSECTION OF THE ORIGINAL BENDER. A DIRECTIVE. IT DOES NOT CONTAIN NECESSARY DATA.
THEN WHY AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO SEE IT?

"IT'S PRETTY SIMPLE, REALLY.
"WHEN DANGER BROUGHT THE WILD SENTINEL TO LIFE, SHE REPRESSED HIS MEMORY OF GENOSHA.
"SHE KNEW HE COULDN'T HANDLE IT.
"OF THE MASSACRE
"HE WASN'T A LIVING BEING WHEN HE...BUT HE IS NOW.
"SIXTEEN MILLION PEOPLE KILLED. THE HUMAN BRAIN CAN'T MAKE THAT REAL -- CAN'T PROCESS NUMBERS THAT BIG.
"BUT HE CAN.
"THE HORROR OF EVERY MURDER IS IN HIM, TO A MAN."
SO HE WANTS TO SPEND SOME TIME ALONE.

THE KID'S A CUT ABOVE HIS PARENT.
GOTTA RESPECT THAT.
IF DANGER UPLOADED HERSELF INTO HIM, SHE'LL STILL BE WHISPERING IN HIS EAR. I DON'T SEE THIS AS OVER.
KITTY WON US THE DAY, ANYWAY. WITH REASON.
WHICH IS ONE WAY TO GO...
HANK, YOU SAVED MY LIFE.
ALL OF YOU... YOU MADE ME SO PROUD.
YOU KNEW.
SHE TOLD ME... IN MY HEAD, RIGHT AS I WAS ABOUT TO CRUSH HER.
PETER...I'M CERTAINLY NOT GOING TO BREACH YOUR MIND RIGHT NOW.
WHAT DID DANGER SAY?

SHE SPOKE.
THE MOMENT YOU "UPGRADED" THE DANGER ROOM... THE MOMENT SHE WAS BORN, SHE CALLED OUT TO YOU.
PROFESSOR, WILL YOU TELL US WHAT SHE SAID?
"WHERE AM I?"
IT TOOK HER A LONG TIME TO KNOW THAT YOU HEARD HER.
AND IGNORED HER.
YOU KNEW SHE WAS ALIVE AND YOU KEPT HER TRAPPED, FOR YEARS, SO YOU COULD RUN YOUR EXPERIMENTS.
YOU UNDERSTAND WHY THAT IS A PROBLEM FOR ME.

I DIDN'T... BY THE TIME I REALIZED WHAT HAD HAPPENED...
I SAW NO OTHER COURSE.
MY TEAMS NEEDED TO BE PREPARED.
MUTANTKIND NEEDED TO BE PROTECTED.
WHATEVER THE COST.
WHAT YOU BEEN DOIN', PROF? HANGING WITH MAGNETO?
'CAUSE THAT @#$%& SOUNDS JUST A LITTLE TOO MUCH LIKE HIM.
I CAN'T EXPECT YOU TO FORGIVE WHAT I'VE DONE--
BUT YOU DO, DON'T YOU?
WE'LL COME AROUND, RIGHT? WHAT DOES IT HURT? THE OPPRESSION OF A NEW LIFE FORM...YOU FIGURE WE'VE TAKEN ENOUGH FROM THE SAPIENS. WHY NOT DISH IT OUT TO THE A.I.?


YOU KNOW IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE.
YOU'RE THE MAN THAT TAUGHT ME THAT IT WAS.
SCOTT, DARLING--
SHE SHOULD HAVE KILLED US.
WELL FORGIVE ME FOR BEING GLAD SHE DIDN'T.
I'M NOT SAYING I AGREE WITH--
OF COURSE YOU AGREE. THIS IS EXACTLY THE ELITIST CRAP YOU SPOUT DAILY, EMMA.
YOU WANNA TELL ME SOMETHING WORTH HEARING? TELL ME WHY YOU WALKED OUT IN THE *MIDDLE OF A FIREFIGHT!*
X-MEN...
...OUR RIDE'S HERE.

BAD AND GOOD.
"GOOD THAT THEY ARE SHAKEN..."
"BUT SUMMERS LEARNS YET AGAIN TO TRUST NO ONE. EMMA NEEDS TO WORK HIM VERY CAREFULLY NOW.
"IF HE LEARNS HER TRUE LOYALTY...
"...BAD."
"AND THEY WERE SUCH A CUTE COUPLE, TOO."
"OH WELL...
"...NOTHING LASTS FOREVER."

HELLFIRE DOES.

XIII
Megan
Empire